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# EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE ABIDJAN BUREAU



FBIS-2607-88 1 March 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THRU:

Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT:

Monthly Report--Abidjan Bureau--February 1988

#### I. GENERAL

Residents of Ivory Coast have begun to feel the effects of a Value Added Tax on consumables imposed by the Ivorian Government on 1 January 1988. The tax ranges from seven percent for items like toothpaste and soap to 25 percent for luxury items. Though there are specific items which are legally taxable, it is the general perception that merchants are raising the prices of many products which do not fall within the purview of the new regulation.

#### II. OPERATIONS

#### A. Monitorial/Editorial

- 1. The Senegalese presidential election was the key story during February in what was otherwise a relatively slow month. What the month lacked in volume was more than compensated for in drama. During the course of the elections in Senegal, one of the few multi-party democracies in West Africa, there were charges of election rigging and fraud, threats to ignore the election results, heated campaign appearances, student demonstrations, and arrests of "Libyan agents." The unofficial election results showed the incumbent, Abdou Diouf, to be the winner. Diouf promptly declared a state of emergency and arrested his chief rival, Abdoulaye Wade who had hinted that he might form his own cabinet if he lost the election through "massive fraud." In short, it was "super Tuesday" African style.
- 2. On 19 February Senegalese media announced that "two Libyan nationals carrying weapons and explosive devices were arrested at Dakar airport." They reportedly had started the trip in Benin and traveled via Abidjan. A third "Libyan agent" was then reported to have been detained while trying to illegally enter the country by train from Mali. Later, the "Ayatollah of Kaolack," a "former opposition Muslim fanatic," according to AFP, was arrested. He had traveled on the same plane as the first two detainees.

- 3. In Zaire, President Mobutu's government formally denied having received a letter from 48 U.S. Congressmen threatening to cut U.S. aid because of the "brutal repression" of the political opposition. In the Central African Republic, President Kolingba commuted the death sentence of former Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa to life imprisonment at hard labor. In Nigeria, a Libyan diplomat was killed, apparently by armed robbers. Significant visits during the month included trips to Ivory Coast by the Niger and Burkina Faso heads of state and a visit to Moscow by Malian President Traore.
- 4. On 3 February the Translations Committee [TRACK], a monitorial section working group, unveiled its first bulletin, a translation aid containing translations of troublesome French words and phrases. committee is chaired by senior monitor and is composed of monitors with Chief Monitor and Shift Supervisor as coordinators. The committee will periodically publish bulletins designed to enhance the quality of the bureaus translations and improve monitorial performance. The first TRACK bulletin was sent to quarters Terminology Coordinator. Another monitorial section group, the Documentation Committee [DOC], collects and maintains a compilation of officials' names, place names etc.

## B. Coverage

The bureau's AFP landline was restored on 17 February after being out since 31 January. The Wire provided backstopping during those times when the high frequency backstop signal was not available.

### C. Lateral Services

The bureau received a message of appreciation from BBC's Keith Sommerville for recent coverage of Equatorial Guinea's Malabo radio.

#### D. Technical

- 1. The bureau experienced an unusual number of local power outages this month. Electrical surges resulting from these outages caused some temporary communications equipment failures. During one outage, the emergency generator failed to supply electrical power to the building. The source of the problem was determined to be a bad coupling between the generator and engine. As of this date, a contractor is working to repair the problem. In the meantime, the bureau is using a portable emergency generator to power essential equipment when local outages occur.
- 2. Both of the bureau's Victor computers experienced turbo-access I/O errors during the month and were not operational temporarily until BACH back-up installation procedures were performed.
- 3. A Unican lock access control and two Barco television monitors transferred from Austria Bureau were added to the bureau's inventory of non-expendable equipment during the month.

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III. A	ADMINI	STRAT	מחדי

A. Personnel	
1. Editor was promoted to GS-11 ef	fective 14 February.
2. FRN monitors received promotions during the mon	and teletypist
B. Other	
The bureau instituted several procedural and phresponse to recommendations made during a security sugary.	
IV. VISITS	
FBIS Director Robert Manners conducted a manage of the bureau 1-4 February.	ement inspection tour
	Chief, Abidjan Bureau
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#### Attachments:

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Swaziland Bureau
Deputy Chief, London Bureau

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